-'a place cf brightness, of free expansion, of irresistible action".[5']

With her great love of liberty and her intense desire for improvement, she is "always planning out her development, desiring her perfection, observing her progress".[53] Although she is not altogether unfamiliar with evil, she does not as yet 'know' its power and its dynamic centrality in human life. For her "it had been a very happy life and she had bean a very fortunate person".[59] She is, however, not afraid of a knowledge of evil, and is, in fact, desirous of such knowledge, for it "appeared to Isabel that the unpleasant had been even too absent from her knowledge, for she had gathered from her acquaintance with literature Lhat it was often a source of interest and even of instruction".[40]

Knowledge of evil is necessary in as much as it is instructive, and Isabel's "immense curiosity about life' makes her crave for a life of enriching experiences. It is natural that in Isabel's quest for refinement she desires the encouragement and kindness of an understanding husband. The only obstacle in her quest is poverty, and this is eliminated by the generosity of an intelligent and understanding cousin, Ralph Touchett.

In her 'exploration of life' for refinement are involved her suitors, Ralph Touchett, Caspar Goodwood, Lord Warburton and Osmond. Desirous of achieving, through marriage, a maximum of conscious intensity of life, Isabel weighs and considers the worth and promise of each one of the suitors. Ralph, the invalid, is easily eliminated, for in his case an active life is impossible. His invalidism is symbolic of a spectatorial aloofness from slates of active participation in positive acts of good. Ralph is unrefined to the extent that his culture is an inactive gift of nature, in as much as it converts itself into moral delusion, which constitutes a subtle but definite source of moral evil. The tendency of contemplative, and therefore inactive, good is to remain aloof from involvement, thereby invalidating the good that should have otherwise been a source of growth, It is not sur-

prising, therefore, that it is Ralph who digs the pit into which Isabel falls. The delusion that under his sympathetic and well-meaning observation Isabie will find her hapiness in marriage prompts Ralph to ..an act of generosity which is, in a sense, responsible fot her tragedy.

The lean and tall Goodwood, who has made his fortune as the owner of cotton mills, is 'not a man weakly to accept defeat'. He is in love with Isabel, who, although touched by his devotion, does not approve of his utter want of "consonance with the deeper rhythms .of